REMARKS

Status of this application

In the Office Action mailed December 4, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being in improper form for a process claim. Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112(e) as being anticipated by Hancock et al. Patent 6,202,023.

This response amends independent claims 1, 2, 11 and 12 to more clearly point out and distinctly claim the invention. The amendment cancels claims 6-10 and 16-20 to simplify the issues presented.

The specification has been amended to correct typographical errors and to add a cross-reference to the patent number of this application's parent application which has now issued.

The rejection based on the Hancock et al. Patent

Independent claims 1 and 11 are apparatus and method claims respectively which are similar in scope, and both have been amended to more clearly set forth applicants' invention.

Applicants' invention as now claimed employs a user-manipulated control (embodied in the user control 140 seen in Fig. 1) which permits the specify and store user defined regions by selecting a combination of system define regions from a visual display. The specification of the new user defined region is stored in a second set of relational database tables and is transferred to the tables describing objects to associate the new user defined region with one of those objects.

The Hancock et al patent describes a system which includes a database for creating and updating objects, and employs a hierarchical locational address that specifies the location of each object within a nested set of system defined regions. As noted by the Examiner, the Hancock et al. patent further describes user interface controls, including the front end interface 107 which is described at col. 11, line 40 through col. 12, line 7 and an object selection mechanism described at col. 17, line 52 to col. 18, line 3.
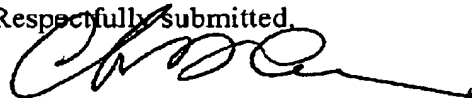
The cited Hancock et al. patent does not, however, describe user-manipulatable control that allows the user to specify user defined regions by selecting and combining a plurality of user defined regions. The Hancock et al. patent describes "database queries" but does not describe separate sets of tables, one of which stores geographically located objects (as in applicants tables

8

120 seen in Fig. 1), and another (seen at 142 in applicant's Fig. 1) which stores the description of system defined and user defined regions created using the user manipulated control.

Conclusion

Reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-5 and 11-25 as amended is requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dated: March 4, 2004   Charles G. Call, Reg. 20,406

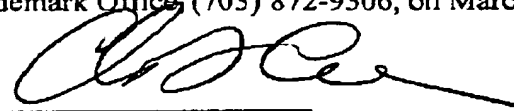## Certificate of Transmission under 37 CFR 1.8

I hereby certify that this *Amendment* is being transmitted by facsimile to the central facsimile number of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, (703) 872-9306, on March, 1 2004.

Dated: March 4, 2004   Signature _____

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9